

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

5/25/17
1. (Currently Amended) A method suitable for projecting demand, the method comprising the steps of:

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- (i) identifying a first set of merchandise;
 - (ii) specifying a second set of merchandise which is to be used as a referent for soliciting information relative to demand behavior for a pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise;
 - (iii) clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand profile for said pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise;
 - (iv) clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand model correlated to model-based demand attributes of said first set of merchandise;
- and
- (v) combining the ~~step (iii)~~ demand profile and the ~~step (iv)~~ demand model into a single encompassing model which is capable of projecting demand of the first set of merchandise.

2. (Original Claim) A method according to claim 1, wherein said first and second sets of merchandise are disparate.

3. (Original Claim) A method according to claim 1, wherein said first and second sets of merchandise overlap.

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, ~~comprising the step of~~ further comprising:

selecting the pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise from the group consisting of item, size, and location.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, ~~comprising the step of~~ further comprising:

selecting a pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise from the group consisting of item, size, color, and location.

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein ~~step iii~~ said clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand profile comprises clustering the second set of merchandise by utilizing an algorithm which partitions this set into non-overlapping clusters with similar size profiles.

7. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein ~~step iv~~ said clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand model comprises generating a demand model based on modeling demand as a function of major variables selected from a group consisting of price, promotions, inventory level, and seasonal effects.

8. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein ~~step v~~ said combining the demand profile and the model comprises combining the demand profile and the demand model

into a single encompassing model by apportioning the model-based demand forecasts, to the appropriate size distribution, using a size demand profile.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer implementable method comprising the steps of:

- (i) identifying a first set of merchandise;
- (ii) specifying a second set of merchandise which is to be used as a referent for soliciting information relative to demand behavior for a pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise;
- (iii) clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand profile for said pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise;
- (iv) clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand model correlated to model-based demand attributes of said first set of merchandise;
- (v) combining the ~~step (iii)~~ generated demand profile and the ~~step (iv)~~ generated demand model into a single encompassing model which is capable of projecting demand of the first set of merchandise.

10. (Currently Amended) A computer suitable for projecting demand, the computer comprising:

- (i) a database comprising an identified first set of merchandise;
- (ii) a database comprising an identified second set of merchandise which is to be used as a referent for soliciting information relative to demand behavior for a pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise;
- (iii) a CPU receiving inputs from the database and comprising means for:
 - (a) clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand profile for

said pre-determined attribute of said first set of merchandise;

(b) clustering the second set of merchandise for generating a demand model correlated to model-based demand attributes of said first set of merchandise; and

(c) ~~combining~~ combining the demand profile and the demand model into a single encompassing model which is capable of projecting demand of the first set of merchandise;

and

(iv) an output display for showing the demand forecasts by the pre-determined attribute.

11. (New) A computerized method for projecting demand for a first set of merchandise, the method comprising:

receiving data for a first set of merchandise;

receiving data for a second set of merchandise, said second set to be used as a referent for soliciting information relative to demand behavior for said first set of merchandise; and

clustering the data for the second set of merchandise to generate a model capable of projecting demand of the first set of merchandise.